King William's TOLERATION:

BEING AN

EXPLANATION

OF THAT

Liberty of Religion,

Which may be Expected from

His Majesty's Declaration.

WITH A

BILL

FOR

Comprehension & Indulgence,

Drawn up in Order to an

Act of Parliament.

LICENSED, *March* the 25. 1689, James Fraser.

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Toleration Explain'd.

SINCE it hath pleaſed his preſent Gracious Majeſty, *William* the Third, in his Declaration, upon his Coming into the Kingdom, to ſignifie, That *this Expedition was intended for no other deſign, but to have a free Parliament*, and to have *That* (as more eſpecially expreſſing his mind) *for the making ſuch Laws, as may Eſtabliſh a good Agreement between the Church of* England, *and all Proteſtant Diſſenters; as alſo for the Covering of all ſuch, who will live peaceably under the Government, as becomes good Subjects, from all Perſecution upon the account of their Religion*: I cannot but think it a very ſeaſonable and acceptable piece of Service, to make ſome little larger Explanation upon theſe Words; which carry in them the full Purport of theſe two things, which we call *Comprehenſion* and *Indulgence*; and which no Wiſe man but will ſee (if they be drawn up into ſuch a Bill, as they ought, and paſs the Houſes) are the true means to the Settlement, and Happineſs of the Nation.

I ſhall preſent the Explanation; Then offer ſuch a Bill; And make ſome Animadverſion on it; and that is the Buſineſs of this Paper.

For the firſt of theſe, in this Atchievement then, or Deſign (full of all Princely Wiſdom, Honeſty, and Goodneſs) there is a Double intereſt to be diſtinguiſhed, and weighed; That of *Religion* it ſelf, and that of the *Nation*.

The Advance of Religion does conſiſt much in the Unity of its Profeſſors, both in Opinion and Practice; to be of one Mind, and one Heart, and one Way (in Diſcipline and Worſhip) ſo far as may be according to the Scriptures.

The Advance of the *Nation* does lie in the Freedom and Flouriſhing of *Trade*, and ingrafting the whole Body into the Common Benefit, and Dependance on the Government.

The *One* of theſe calls for an *Eſtabliſhed Order* and *Agreement*: the *Other* beſpeaks an *Indulgence*, and the fulleſt *Liberty of Conſcience* that is but *Tolerable*.

For whilſt People are in danger of ſuffering about *Religion*, they dare

not launch into *Trade*, but keep their *Money*, as knowing not into what Streights they may be driven: and when, in reference to their *Sect* and *Party*, they are held under *Severity*, it is easie for those who are designing Heads, to Mould them into Wrath and Faction; which, without that occasion, would melt and dissolve it self into bare dissent of *Opinion*, peaceably rejoycing under the Enjoyment of an equal *Protection*.

The King is concern'd as *Supreme* Governour, and as *Christian* Governour. As he is King, he is to seek the Welfare of the Nation; as he is *Christian*, the Flourishing of *Religion*.

The *Protestant* Religion is particularly his interest, not only as imbarked with *Holland*, and his *Allies*; but as this Kingdom does lye in Balance still with its Neighbour Nations.

The Judgment now of some hath been for a *Comprehending* Act, which might take in those that are for our Parochial Churches, that the Laws then might be more severely Executed upon all those that separate from Them, in order to their Reduction: But the Judgment of some others is for a Free and Equal Act of Grace to all indifferently, whether Separatists or Others, abhorring *Comprehension*, as more dangerous to them upon that account mentioned, than all the Acts that have passed.

Neither of these judge up to the full interest of the King and Kingdom, as is proposed. It becomes not him, whose Principles will admit him to own our *Parochial Churches*, and enjoy a Living, to be willing to have his Brethren, that cannot, to be given up to Persecution. And it becomes not the *Separatist*, if he may not enjoy his Conscience, to repine and envy another for reaping any farther Emolument, seeing both of them (supposing the latter may do so) will have as much at the Bottom, as can be in their Capacities desired of either.

It is an Act therefore of a Mixt Complection, providing both *Comprehension* and *Indulgence*, for the different Parties, that must serve the Nation.

There are Two sorts of the Protestant Dissenters. One that owns the Established Ministry, and our Parish Congregations, and are in a Capacity of Union upon that account, desiring it heartily upon such considerations only, as may but satisfie their Consciences in the Matter: The Other that owns not our Churches, and so are uncapable of a *Conjunction*, who do not, and cannot desire, or seek it.

For the *One*, that which is to be proposed, is a farther Latitude in the present *Constituted Order*, that such may be received; and this we call

call *Comprehenſion.* For the *Other*, there is indeed nothing can be done to bring thoſe in, and joyn them with us in Parochial Union; yet is there this to be propounded, That we bear with them, and not let any one that lives peaceably be Perſecuted for his Conſcience; and this we call *Indulgence.*

If the *Presbyterian* now may be *Comprehended*, he will be ſatisfied to act in his Miniſtry, without any endeavouring the alteration of *Epiſcopacy*, any otherwiſe than as conducive to advance that *Comprehenſion.* If the *Congregationaliſt* be *Indulged*, he will be ſatisfied, though he be not *Comprehended*; for That he cannot come up to: And ſo ſhall there be no Diſobligation put on any, but all be pleaſed, and enjoy the Benefit of ſuch a Bill.

Let but the Stakes for Comprehenſion be ſet wide enough, to take in all who can own, and come into the Publick Liturgy, (which are far the greater Weight of the Nation) and when the Countenance of Authority, and all State-Emoluments are caſt into one Scale; and nothing but *Labour* and *Conſcience* put in the other, the Men that *Conform* not, being let alone to come to themſelves, without *Perſecution* to *enflame* them, or *Preferment* to *encourage* them, (eſpecially if one Expedient be uſed, that is, ſome other Bill be preferred againſt Pluralities, to let in the *Comprehended* to ſomething, that ſuch as come in may find it really better to them, to be a *Prieſt* to a *Tribe*, than a *Levite* to a *Family*,) we need not doubt, but Time, the Miſtriſs of the Wiſe and the Unwiſe, will diſcover the peaceable Fruit of ſuch Counſels.

Thus much for the *Deſign* and *Explanation* of it. Now for the Second thing, A *Bill* to comprize the Contents, and to prevent all *malignant* and *inſufficient* Endeavours of any *Perſon* or *Party*, to *ſhorten*, or *widen* that Liberty of Religion, more than is meet, or charitable to their Brethren, on one ſide or the other, which we may expect from our *King* and *Queen*, and preſent *Parliament*, for the accompliſhment of His Majeſties Royal *Words*, ſo well tempered with Benignity and Wiſdom, in his *Declaration* at firſt mentioned, and unto which the Nation may undoubtedly truſt: I ſhall need nothing, but to Re-print a Bill, which any one may find who pleaſe, (that no Body may take Exceptions thereupon) in a certain bound Book, call'd, *The Samaritan*, ſet forth in the Year, 1682. being the reſult of much Agitation in the Houſe of Commons, for Eaſe and Mitigation to the Diſenters ſo long ago, and put together by conſent of ſuch that knew beſt their own Grievances in this manner, to lie by, and ſerve ſuch an Occaſion.

The

The Bill for *Comprehension* and *Indulgence.*

WHEREAS *The Peace of the State is highly concern'd in the Peace of the Church; therefore, at all Times, but especially in this Conjuncture, it is most Necessary to be preserved. In Order therefore to remove Differences, and Dissatisfactions, which may arise among Protestants:* BE IT ENACTED, *by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by, and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament Assembled, and by the Authority of the same,* THAT *if any Person shall (without making any Interpretation of his own, unless it be such as shall be allowed by his Diocesan, which if it be Orthodox he shall do) Subscribe and Declare his Assent, and Consent unto, and Approbation of the Articles of Religion, mention'd in the Statute made in the* 13th. *Year of the Late Queen* Elizabeth; *except only, the* 34th. 35th. *and* 36th. *Articles; and also, except these Words in the* 20th. *Article,* viz. The Church hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith; *in like manner, as he is already obliged to Subscribe and Declare his Assent and Consent unto, and Approbation of all the said* 39. *Articles: Every such Person shall be as capable of Taking any Degree, in either University, or being ordained Priest or Deacon, or of being collated, admitted, or put into, and to hold and enjoy any Ecclesiastical Benefice, or Promotion, as if the said Person had Subscribed and Declared his Assent and Consent unto, and Approbation of all the said Articles of Religion.*

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That every Person Ordained, between the Year of our Lord,* 1644. *and the First of* May, *in the Year,* 1660. *according to the Form of Ordination, used by laying on of Hands by the Presbytery, shall be as capable of any Ecclesiastical Benefice or Promotion, as if he had been Ordained, according to the Form of Making and Ordaining Priests and Deacons in the Church of* England. *And that every Person Ordained only by Presbyters, since the Year of our Lord* 1660. *shall not be admitted to any Benefice, unless he receive a Second Imposition of Hands from some Bishop, to recommend him to the Grace of God, for the Work or Exercise of his Office, in the Place or Charge unto which he is Called; and the Bishop shall frame his Words accordingly.*

AND

AND WHEREAS, *by a Statute made in the* 13th. *and* 14th. *Year of this Late Majeſty's Reign, Entituled,* An Act for the Uniformity of the Publick Prayer, and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies; and for Eſtabliſhing the Form of Ordaining and Conſecrating Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons, in the Church of *England, there are Two Declarations impoſed upon ſeveral Perſons, and in ſuch manner as is there Specified:*

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, *by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon, that ſhall hereafter be preſented, or collated, or put into any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, or Promotion, ſhall declare his unfeigned Aſſent and Conſent to the Uſe of all things contained, and preſcribed in the Book of* Common Prayer; *nor make and ſubſcribe the other Declaration or Acknowledgment, viz.* (I. A. B. Do declare, That it is not Lawful to take up Arms againſt the King, *&c.*) *according to the Forms in the ſaid Act, in the* 13th. *and* 14th. *Year of his Majeſties Reign, directed and appointed: But that both the ſaid Declarations ſhall be wholly omitted; any thing in the aforeſaid Statute to the contrary, notwithſtanding.*

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon ſhall hereafter be capable of being collated, admitted, or put into any Eccleſiaſtical Benefice, or Promotion, before ſuch time as the ſaid Perſon ſhall have taken the* Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance *before the Biſhop of the Diocеſs (who is hereby impowred to adminiſter the ſame) and ſhall alſo make and ſubſcribe the Declaration, mentioned in an Act of Parliament, made in the* 30th. *Year of the Reign of King* Charles *the* II. *Entituled,* An Act to prevent Papiſts from Sitting in either Houſe of Parliament: *And the Name of every Perſon, ſo taking the Oath, and making and ſubſcribing the Declaration aforeſaid, ſhall be enrolled, with the Day and Time of his taking the ſame, in Rolls to be kept by the reſpective Biſhops of each Dioceſs, for that purpoſe.*

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforeſaid, That no Perſon ſhall hereafter be obliged to take the Oath of Canonical Obedience, or to make the Subſcription required by the Canons, or to go to the Biſhops for a Licenſe to Preach, being already Lawfully Ordained; any Statute or Cuſtom to the contrary, notwithſtanding.*

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforeſaid, That from henceforth, no Perſon wear a Surplice, during the Time of Reading Common Prayer, or Preaching, or performing any Religious Worſhip, in any Church or Chappel whatſoever; except only in the Chappel of the Kings Majeſty, and all Cathedral Churches of this Realm of* England, *and Dominion of* Wales.

AND

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That from henceforth no Minister, or other Ecclesiastical Person, shall be obliged or compelled to use the Sign of the Cross in Baptism; or any Parent obliged to have his Child Christened by the Minister of the Parish, if the said Minister will not use, or omit the Sign of the Cross, according to the desire of the Parents; who in that Case may procure some other Minister to do it. Nor shall the Child of any Person be refused Baptism, for want of any God-fathers, and God-mothers, so long as the Parent is present to fill their place.*

AND *be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That no Minister, or Ecclesiastical Person, that shall officiate in the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, shall refuse it to any person, that desires to be admitted to the same, although such person shall not use the gesture of Kneeling in the Act of receiving, nor come up to the Comunion-Table; but shall go to such convenient place of the Church, where such Person is; and there give it him in some other decent gesture, of Ordinary use in the Reformed Churches. Nor shall any Minister be troubled for the with-holding his own Act, in delivery of the Sacrament, from any whom he judges Notoriously Unworthy, or unfit for it: Nor for Suspending his Reading the Sentence of Excommunication, against any of his Parish, untill he be satisfied in the Case, that his Crime deserves it.*

And to the intent, that Uniformity may (so far as it is needful, and so far as it can) be still Maintained, be it Enacted moreover, by the Authority aforesaid, That every Parson, Vicar, and Lecturer, shall conform to the Liturgy of the Church, in the Ordinary Lords-day Service, Reading the same by himself, or Assistant, as by Law it is Established: Reserving a Necessary, and Just Liberty for his Conscience, *in any Matter or Words, which himself esteems unlawful (and so to him it is Sin) and also for* Prudence, *in the whole management, to Act with respect to Time, Place and Circumstances so as appears most conducive to Edification. And as long as the main Body of the Service appointed, is there Read, and the substance of the Offices be there Performed, he shall not be Punishable for any breach otherwise of the Acts of Uniformity; any thing in the said Statutes to the contrary notwithstanding.*

AND *for as much as there are some Ministers of a good Life, that cannot (according to their Judgments) allow of our Parochial Churches, nor the Book of Liturgy; but do choose to Worship God, and Jesus Christ, in the way of their Gathered, and Separate Congregations; and crave the Protection, and Clemency of the King, upon their Allegiance as other Subjects:*

BE *it Enacted furthermore, by the Authority aforesaid, That for the Happiness, and quiet of the Realm, and the Reduction of these Men, by other*

ther means, than those that have hitherto proved Unsuccessful, All Prosecution of the Penal Laws, against the Nonconformists, of every sort that professs the Protestant Religion, be suspended, untill, by a further Act of Parliament, those that are fit to be Tolerated, *and the* Intolerable *shall be distinguished; and such Order be taken as is necessary, to the Settling a firm and lasting Union in the Nation.*

Thus much for the First, and Second thing, the *Design* and *Bill*; now for the Third, some little *Animadversions* upon it. I must confess my self One, that am concerned, and that have been so still, when *Parliaments* Sate, both in my Mind, and my Endeavours to the utmost, for Peace and Union in the Church; which is the cause that this *Bill*, thus produced, was put and left upon Record, on purpose in that Book mentioned, for some future *Parliament* to use it self, or to take *Measure by*, for making *another*, if they would fit the *Nonconformists* General Case, and accomplish the End design'd. And now am I afraid at my Heart, lest when we have such an opportunity, as we never had really before, when *King*, and *Queen*, and *Parliament*, and the whole *People* are for Uniting the *Protestants*, as our Interest, against the danger of the *Papists* from abroad, and at home, there should be some Obstruction yet put to this Accommodation, which is so forward and hopeful; either through the Machinations of some *close Enemies*, by such Methods as we cannot *discern*, and so cannot *prevent*; or through the shortness of *true Friends*, who for want of knowing perfectly what it is the *Nonconformist* must have, may be over-seen, or over-reacht, and sit down with something less than will serve the turn; and for that Reason have I gathered together, and do put forth this Paper, though not without much Reluctancy; because I know well, that some men will be ready to say, Who are you? and what have you to do with these Matters, which belong to the Parliament? But I say, They do belong to me, and are the Concern of every Body; and if, for lack of a little intimation at first, the Nonconformist should come to have their Consciences choakt, and be deprived of their Liberty at last, those Men of all other, that now would stave me back, and reprove me for medling, might more deservedly be the First to upbraid us all, and say, Why did you not look better to it, when it was Time? You may thank your selves; it was through your own negligence, that you had not what you would, at such a Season.

Be it known therefore, (or remembred) that there being two *Bills* in the *House* of *Commons* upon the *Anvil*, in *Charles* the Second's time;

the One of them for *Comprehenſion*, the Other for *Indulgence*; (the Titles were otherwiſe worded, but the Intent ſuch): The Bill for *Indulgence* was ſo well attended by an induſtrious Member of the Houſe, that nothing was wanting to the Compleating of it; but the Bill for *Comprehenſion*, being drawn up by Gentlemen that did not, and could not fully underſtand the Scruples of the *Nonconformiſts*, was both imperfect and neglected: Only one Perſon, without door, having procured a Copy, and finding it ſo, did by applying himſelf to ſeveral Members about it, get ſomething to be changed, or put into it, at the *Committee*; and afterwards (with Conſent, and Aſſiſtance of ſome of his Brethren) *improve* and *perfect* it, againſt the *Sitting* of the Parliament at *Oxford*; but they ſitting not, it was thought good to put it as a Memorial into that Book, and for that end, as is mentioned.

When I ſay now, this *Bill* was *perfected*; as I mean it only in regard to the *Contents*, leaving the *Words* to be formed better, as a *Parliament* pleaſed; ſo by this *Perfection*, I mean not ſuch a *Meaſure*, as all thoſe Condeſcentions, or Allowances, fit to to be made to the Diſſenter, may not *Exceed* (for there is the *Service-Book* may be Reviſed, and every thing in it, that gives occaſion of ſtumbling to any, may be changed; and there are other things may be expected at this time, which could not rationally heretofore): but ſuch a *Meaſure*, as they muſt not fall *ſhort of*, without rendring the Bill inſignificant. For if there be ten Thorns in the *Nonconformiſts* Foot, and the *Biſhops* pull out *Nine* of them, and leave the *Tenth*, he cannot go along with them for that *One* only. There are ſome few *Additions* therefore inſerted in this *Bill*, which were not put into it by the *Committee* at that time; the Reaſons whereof will appear in their own Light; Excepting Two of them, which I will therefore ſpeak ſomething about, the One being concerning the Subſcription of the *Articles*, the Other concerning *Orders*.

I will begin with that concerning *Orders*. In the late Times, when the *Biſhops* were down, many were Ordained by *Presbyters*, and the *Parliament* was willing to allow thoſe *Orders*, as good in a Caſe of Neceſſity: But there being Others ordained ſince the return of the Biſhops, there was no Proviſion made for ſuch in the *Bill*. As for theſe Perſons therefore, that no neglect of the *Biſhops* may be countenanced, here is the Propoſal of ſuch a *Laying on of their Hands*, which may be lawfully received. For there is *Ordinatio ad Officium, & Reordinatio ad Exercitium particulare* may conſiſt together. An Ordination to the *Office*, or *Miniſtry* it ſelf, is not to be repeated. He that is once ordained to That, whether by *Presbyters*, or *Biſhops*, cannot receive the Spiritual Power

(or

(or Character,) or be made Miniſters, *Again*: But there is a *Laying on of Hands* to the *Work* of that Office, in regard to a new *Charge*, as *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who were Miniſters before, are yet *ſeparated* to that *peculiar Work*, unto which the Holy Ghoſt called them (*Acts* 13.) By the *Laying on of the Hands* of thoſe at *Antioch*, and ſuch an Ordination as this, being capable to be uſed more than once, is the Remedy applyed therefore to theſe Perſons in the *Bill*, as the only *medium* for Reſolution of this Difficulty.

For the Other matter concerning the Subſcription to the Churches Articles, I have ſomething more than this, to ſay about it. Whoſoever have read a Book, called, *A part of Regiſter*, wherein there is a relation of ſeveral things, in reference to the *Nonconformiſts* in Q. *Elizabeth*'s Days, they will find, that nothing was then ſo grievous to them, as the *Subſcriptions* of thoſe Times, and the Subſcription to theſe *Articles* was one; which gives me Affliction to conſider, how by the Contexture of both thoſe Bills, before named, and like now, to be revived, and be two again, the Nonconformiſt Miniſters whole Freedom from Proſecution of the Law againſt him, is made to depend upon his Subſcribing the *Articles of Religion*; A bottom I muſt ſay, more narrow, more ſervile, and leſs ingenuous, than might be wiſhed. For what man of a free Judgment can Subſcribe to the 39. or 36. Articles, which himſelf hath not drawn up, without a Liberty of his own interpretation? Indeed, if that were a thing lawful, upon the reading the *Articles*, to frame a Senſe of ones own, and Subſcribe it in that ſenſe; nothing would be more eaſie, than ſuch a Subſcription: But when the *Impoſitions* of our *Superiours* muſt conſcientiouſly be taken in the Senſe of the *Impoſers*, or elſe we do but prevaricate, are falſe, or perjurious in the ſight of God: there is nothing almoſt under Heaven, that a Man ſhould be more tender of, than this buſineſs of *Subſcribing*. The doubtfulneſs of many about the *Ceremonies*, is not to be compared to a Conviction of Conſcience that a Man muſt not Subſcribe to any point of *Doctrine*, which he believes untrue; and I muſt needs add, that Except *the Declaring and Swearing, that it is not lawful to take Arms againſt thoſe that are Commiſſionated by the King, upon any cauſe*, there is no part of *Conformity* more hard to my Genius, than this *Subſcription*. It is an unfortunate thing therefore, that, when *Aſſent* and Conſent to the *Liturgy*, is found a thing ſo truly grievous to all, as to be judg'd neceſſary to be taken away; this *Aſſent* and Conſent yet, and *Approbation* of the *Articles*, ſhould be thought no Grievance to any Body. Eſpecially, when in *One*,

the Conformiſt hath a Shift, or Salvo, that he Subſcribes but to the *Uſe:* but in the *Other*, there is no Shift, no Salvo at all, nothing but down-right Hypocriſie and Falſe-hood; when a Man comes and profeſſes his Aſſent and Conſent to, and Approbation of, thoſe Articles in the *Churches* Senſe, but does underſtand them to be true, only in his *own.* I know indeed, that in the Opinion of many, ſome of our more eminent Divines, the Subſcribing the Articles is to be taken for nothing but a Reſpect to the Church, and an Engagement, that they will not Preach againſt them: But theſe Men, how worthy, or how conſcientious they be otherwiſe, muſt be told, that in this they ſhew no Conſcience; for I would know from any ſuch Man, in what *Dictionary* I ſhall find, that *Aſſent* and *Conſent* to an *Article* and *Approbation* of it, is no more than I won't *Preach* againſt it. And what Impoſition after that ſhall hold him, who can get leave of his Conſcience to make ſuch an Evaſion? Beſides that, to promiſe I will never Preach or Write againſt theſe *Articles*, if I believe the Church miſtaken in the Doctrine of any of them, is really to me a harder Task, than to Subſcribe them; in as much as to tell *one* Lye, is not ſo grievous as to tell a great *many*; which as often as I break my Promiſe, I muſt be doing.

The Queſtion therefore here ariſes upon this, What the Parliament ſhould do about this Subſcription, ſeeing it is a Grievance undoubtedly, and ought to be Redreſſed? Now there are Four ways may be propoſed; Either the removing it, or changing it, or providing a Salve againſt it; or that, which is leaſt, letting this little *Addition* ſtand, and be allowed That which is put into the Bill, for that end.

For the firſt Way, I muſt needs ſay, That *that* is the eaſieſt; and it is a common Saying, *The firſt is beſt.* And what does hinder, but this *Aſſent* and *Conſent* to the *Articles* may be taken away, as well as *Aſſent* and *Conſent* to the Book of Common Prayer? Here are the ſame crooked *ſ*'s to ſtick in our Throats, and why ſhould not both Declarations fare alike? Why, is it not enough for a Man to profeſs his Belief of the Scripture, and of the Apoſtles Creed, and to take the Teſt againſt Popery, to qualify him for the benefit of any Bill of this kind?

For the Second Way, which I ſuppoſe to be the moſt likely to take Effect, is this. Let theſe Declarations of our *Aſſent* and *Conſent* to, and Approbation of the Articles, which we are required now to Subſcribe, be turned into a Declaration of That which the more ingenuous of our Conformiſts do ſay, is all their meaning in their Subſcribing of them; and that Expedient may do the buſineſs. We muſt not

Subſcribe.

Subſcribe to ſuch Words as theſe, with the Reſervation of a leſs Meaning, That is Equivocation; but we may Subſcribe to ſuch Words as ſignifie only that Meaning, inſtead of theſe which ſignifie more, and be at eaſe in our *Subſcription*. I *A. B. do declare*, That I do bear that due Reſpect to the Church of *England*, and her Book of *Articles*, as an Inſtrument of Concord; That I will not *Seditiouſly* or *Schiſmatically*, I will not *directly* or *expreſly* Preach or Write againſt any of them, to the Breach of Charity, or making diſturbance among Chriſtians. There are ſome ſuch Words as theſe muſt be put in, for *conſequentially* and *reductively*, or before we are aware *innocently*, and ſometime *neceſſarily*, in regard to ſome point of Doctrine, which we think in their Senſe contrary to Scripture; we muſt and ſhall Preach againſt them, and yet our Promiſe muſt not be broken. I will, to avoid Scruple, quite as to my ſelf, and for the fuller ſatisfaction to my Conformiſt Brethren, and to acquit my Conſcience before all ſorts of Men, make this Declaration of my own Accord. That *I do from my Heart give my Conſent to the Reformation of Religion, which was made by the Church of* England *in her Doctrine, and her Worſhip: I do eſteem thoſe Perſons, that are made Miniſters by her Book of Orders, to be lawful Miniſters, and our Parochial Congregations to be true Chriſtian Churches, conſiſting of Paſture and People, who have a Fundamental Authority from Chriſt, of Teaching and Ruling them according to his Inſtitution; I do ſubmit to her Government, as under the King: And I do receive her Articles and Homilies, as Books full of wholeſom Truth, and good Inſtructions, Inſtrumental to Concord; and that They contain in them all things neceſſary to Salvation.*

For the Third Way, It is that, which, if I might chooſe, I ſhould prefer before any, as moſt agreeable to my Spirit (for the ſake of other Incumbrances like this): and my Propoſal ſhall be the putting into the Bill (or ſuch Bills) a Clauſe for the ſaving a Mans Conſcience, though he do Subſcribe, and ſubmit to ſuch Injunctions as theſe are; and that Clauſe which I would offer upon this account, ſhould be to this *purpoſe*, committing the *Words* (here and before) if they offend, to the amendment of the Lawyers.—— *And forasmuch as all Impoſitions are to be taken in the Senſe of the Impoſers, unleſs ſome proviſion of Liberty, Allowance, or Exception be made for the Taker to do otherwiſe, it is hereby declared, That this Subſcription (Aſſent, Conſent, Approbation) is not impoſed, or to be impoſed on any in the very Senſe and Meaning of the Compilers of the Articles or Impoſers (whereof a Man can never be ſure, and hardly ſo much perſwaded of ſometimes, as to act in Faith) but in a Rational Conſtruction (agreeable to the Holy Scripture) of the Subſcribers own, or of ſome judicious Expoſitor;*

that

that is, in the Terms of the School, not in the Authentick, but a Doctrinal Interpretation.

For the Fourth and Last Way, which is That I take in this Bill, in regard to the Passing it with the less Notice (for it is brought-in, as the *Reader* may see, in a Parenthesis); I must confess it to be some thing coincident with the Third, but more confined; consisting in a Liberty of a Man's own Sense, for such as scruple at any Article, but so as to bring his *Explication* to the *Bishop*, that if it be *Heretical*, he may reject him; if *Orthodox*, receive him: and so a due Regard be had to the Consciences of such Persons, and yet the Church not neglected upon that Account.

By this way of Providing against the Scruples of the more Considerate, about this momentous piece of Conformity, the Subscription to the Articles, (when the Provision only of the Exception of Three of them will be too short) we must not understand this Bill to be drawn up so, because this way is best; but upon Supposition, that neither of the other Proposals would be granted, and also, because this Bill is no *new* Bill now, but *Produced*: This is a Bill Printed Six or Seven Years since; and at that time, this way was that only which could be thought on (and in this manner to be brought in) as more likely to be Passed.

Howbeit, the Scene now being altered, I cannot tell but one of the other ways may pass sooner; and this I am sure, that some Condescention herein, appears more and more necessary from that Consideration which is yet farther to be pressed, the difficulty (I mean) at bottom, which lies here. The *Articles* of the *Church* must be taken in the Sense of the *Church*. The Parliament indeed imposes the Subscription; but is not the Imposer in whose Sense the *Articles* must be taken, because it enjoyns them as the *Churches Articles*, that is all one as enjoyning them to be taken in her Sense; and that Church is the Church in Q. *Elizabeth*'s Days, when the *Articles* were compiled and enjoined at first. And hereupon, I will offer one Instance; and suppose a Man to scruple the 11*th.* Article, which tells us, That we are *justified* by *Faith only*. I do here believe in my Conscience, that the Sense wherein the Church then understood This, must be the Sense of our First Reformers, and that is by *Faith* taken Objective, *in sensu Correlativo*, not as a *Work*, but an *Instrument*; which in short is, in such a Sense (which Divines know) as excludes all Works, *Evangelical* as well as *Legal*, from Justification. I will suppose now, that the Man comes to the Bishop, and says, He cannot subscribe this *Article* in the Churches Sense, because he verily believes this to be her Sense; and that to be inconsistent with St. *James*, who says direct-

ly

ly to the contrary, That *by Works a Man is Juſtified, and not by Faith only*: and therefore deſires he may ſubſcribe in his own Senſe, which he is ready to tender, *viz.* That by *Faith* he underſtands Chriſtianity, or the *becoming a Chriſtian*; and that by *Faith only*, he underſtands St. *Paul*'s *Faith without Works*, that is, Faith without the Works of the *Law*, or without being *Circumciſed*, and living according to the *Laws*; and ſo he gives in the Senſe of St. *Paul*, for the Senſe of the *Article*; That a Man is not juſtified by living according to the *Law*, but living according to the *Goſpel only*. I would ask now, Whether there be not reaſon here, both that ſuch a Man ſhould not be excluded for this ſcruple; and that there ſhould be Licenſe provided by ſome ſuch Clauſe in the Bill, for the Biſhops to admit him upon this Explanation; Eſpecially, ſeeing the Reconciliation of St. *James* and St. *Paul*, is thereby made ſo clear, as it muſt tempt his *Acceptation*.

As for the Roman Catholicks at laſt, I will not baulk my Opinion. The *King* (while Prince of *Orange*) hath expreſly ſaid in his Declaration, that he *Excepts not the Papiſts*, And I need not refrain my conſtant Thoughts. I am one my ſelf, be ſure, that am not for *Popery*, but muſt diſtinguiſh between the danger of it when it is in *Dominion*, (that is Uppermoſt by Law or Force) and where it is in *Subjugation*: I very much dread the *One*, I am very gentle toward the *Other*. In order to this, I muſt be againſt the Permiſſion of Factors for a Foreign Juriſdiction; yet ſhould not murmur, if the Sanguinary Laws (whereby ſuch a Crime is made, as Treaſon, to be capital) were repealed. *Again*, I am one not for the *Maſs*, and a general open tolerating its *Votaries* in the *Publick Aſſemblies*; becauſe all *Proteſtants* judg it *Idolatry*, and that open *Idolatry* is not to be tolerated, where it can be helped: But for the private peaceable *Recuſant*, that enjoys his Religion to himſelf, and meddles not with other Folks, his Caſe is the ſame (I judg) with the *Diſſenters*; and I am ſtill for our doing to them, as we would have had them do unto us but a while ago, ſin only excepted. *Yet not altogether with the Idolater, for then muſt ye needs go out of the World.*

I have no more to ſay now, but ſome little about the turning the *Two* Bills (as they were formerly in the *Houſe*) into *One*, which is done by the Print from whence I took it; the Reaſon whereof, I ſuppoſe, was the tediouſneſs of the *Bill* for *Indulgence*; which providing for the Caſe of ſo many, and ſomething or other being like to be omitted, it ſeemed more eaſie, and more ſafe, to wrap up all theſe Caſes together, in the ſecurity of a general Suſpenſion of the Penal Laws about Religion, until a Parliament come that can have leiſure, by a *Committee* or Appointment

pointment of Two or Three Sedulous *Lawyers*, that are fit for the Work, and willing to attend it, to look over all the Statutes that concern *Religion*, for the finding out every thing that is hard, and fit to be Repealed, whether it be the whole *Act*, (or the *Act* at *Oxford*) or part of it (as the Uniformity *Act*) to the end, that those Parts and Clauses (if over grievous but to the Papists themselves) being duly considered, and Matters thoroughly adjusted, an *Act* may be drawn up, that should be a Repealing *Act*, to deliver us from such Burdens altogether; and that were the most Effectual *Indulgence*, or best way to it, that is imaginable: And as for *Comprehension* then, which is a matter of more Curiosity, Debate and Counsel, It were well that this *Bill* here proposed, might be brought in, and past for a *Staying Act*, or *Interim* of *Pacification*, until a Tryal of the Comprehended; some Consults of the Comprehended and Indulged; a Convocation of the Conformists, with part of the Comprehended chosen into that Convocation; a Revisal of the Churches Liturgy, their Book of Orders, their *Articles*, their *Homilies*, their Canons, with other such preliminary matters pre-ordered, may *Administer* the *Advantage* to a more compleat *Act*, and better *Establishment*, than can be expected at this Season. I will conclude with what is apt at present; *Comprehension* without *Indulgence* destroys the Separatist, that is both the Papists and Sectaries. *Indulgence* without *Comprehension* depopulates the Church. *Comprehension* with *Indulgence* Unites the Protestants, secures the Church of *England*, and gives Ease and Safety to all People.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Although there was so much Care taken of the Bill of Indulgence (*as I have said* Page 10.) *when drawn up, that nothing needful should be left out; yet am I told very newly, That there is one Clause in the* Act of Uniformity, *making* Dissenters *lyable to pay* 100 l. *for administring the Sacrament, escaped their Remembrance; and that it is good therefore some general Words, providing a Covering for them from all Danger, by* Common *and* Statute Law unknown, *as well as from the Penalties of the* Law enumerated, *were added to the Bill.*

THE

THE POSTSCRIPT.

BEfore I ſent the fore-going Sheets to the *Preſs*, I underſtood that the Bill for *Indulgence* was brought into the *Houſe of Lords*; and knowing the Contexture long ſince, it made me ſpeak ſo much of the Subſcription to the Articles, as I have done. Since then I have ſeen the Bill for *Comprehenſion*, which is brought in There likewiſe. And though I cannot but in Gratitude take notice of the Candour in it, that the Subſcription to the Articles is waved there; yet do I find Two things in it, which the *Nonconformiſts* will ſtick at, ſo that if they be not mended, the Bill is like to do no Good.

One of theſe things like to ſtick, is this Declaration: *I* A. B. *do approve of the Doctrine, Worſhip, and Government of the Church of* England, *as by Law Eſtabliſhed*, &c. The Government here intended, includes the Hierarchy, with its Officers and Offices, Lay-Chancellours, Officials——, and I know not what more we muſt Subſcribe to, when we ſay, we *approve of this Government*. And when the 36*th*. Article of the Church is excepted from our Subſcription in the *Bill of Indulgence*, as known to have been ſo grievous to the *Nonconformiſts*, from Queen *Elizabeth*'s days untill now, in regard to the *Arch-Biſhops* and *Biſhops*, though it ſays only, that the Book for their Conſecration *hath in it nothing Superſtitious and Ungodly* (which it may not have, though in ſomething otherwiſe we may not *approve* it,) I wonder it ſhould not come to be thought, that ſuch words would not down with our *Nonconformiſts*, *I approve of this Government*; Eſpecially when ſome of the moſt Grave of them, have took the *Covenant* for its Extirpation. I ſhall therefore humbly beſeech the *Houſe of Lords*, if it be not too late, or if it be, the *Houſe of Commons*, that if ſuch a Declaration muſt be impoſed, ſome ſuch words as theſe may be ſubſtituted in its room: *I* A. B. *do heartily approve of the Reformation made by the Church of* England, *in her Doctrine*

and Worſhip: I ſhall ſubmit to her Government, ſo far as I can with a good Conſcience: And I receive her Articles, as conducive to Concord, and containing in them all things neceſſary to Salvation.

The Other Thing like to ſtick, is the Buſineſs of *Re-ordination*, in regard to thoſe that have been ordained only by *Presbyters*; and it is to be noted, that there is a *Device* offered in this Bill, for Reconciling the *Biſhop* and *Presbyter*, by giving Satisfaction to Both: The Biſhop challenges a ſole Right of giving Orders, from the *Canons* of the *Apoſtles*, (as they are called) and from *Councils* and *Fathers*, (even *Jerom* himſelf) down to the Reformation: And the Miniſters ordained by Presbyters plead the Cuſtom of the Reformed Churches, and their *Authority* from Chriſt; accounting, that the Spiritual Power comes not by the Hands which are laid on him, whether of Biſhop or Presbyter, (and therefore ſays *Hooker*, *We breath not on the Ordained, as Chriſt did*) but flows immediately (the Conditions being put) from Chriſt's Inſtitution. If the Biſhop part with this Privilege, he degrades himſelf of the Power the Church hath given him; and if the Miniſter recedes from his former Orders, he departs from the Authority Chriſt hath given him. To reconcile both, this is the *Device*. The Biſhop ſhall acknowledg the Perſon ordained by Presbyters, to be a Miniſter already, whoſe Miniſterial *Acts* have been and are valid, as the *Acts* of any other Miniſter; and that he ordains him not therefore to the *Office*, which he has already, but admits him to the *Exerciſe* of his Miniſtry in the Church of *England*, and conſequently to the Emoluments that may ariſe to him upon that *Account*. The Man was, and is, and muſt be a *Miniſter of Chriſt* before; but he is no *Legal* Miniſter, or not to be *accounted, reputed, held* to all Intents and Purpoſes a *Miniſter of the Church of England*, till he hath received Impoſition of Hands from a Biſhop. He is a Miniſter before, *in foro Dei*, but not till then a Miniſter *in foro Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ*. As a Man, who is a *Graduate*, or made *Doctor* beyond Sea, and comes to *London*; he is, and muſt be acknowledged a true *Doctor*; but he ſhall not have Liberty to *Practiſe*, till admitted into our College of Phyſitians.

I muſt confeſs my ſelf partial in my reſpect to this *Device*; for I ſuppoſe it deriv'd from Dr. *Wilkins*'s credit into this Bill; and I know from whence, and upon what account, he received it. I will therefore ſay thus much for it; That if this *Device*, may be owned, and acknowledged for what it is, that is, a *New Thing*, or a *New Inſtitution* in the Church, for which an Office ſhould be made, and no trick put on the *Nonconformiſts* by it: As I ſee no cauſe then, why ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Inſtitution, being

being neceſſary for Peace-ſake, might not be *Made*; ſo do I apprehend no unlawfulneſs in the ſubmitting to it. If any ill be in it, it muſt lie on the part of the Biſhop, who brings in a Thing into the *Engliſh* Church, which I confeſs I never read of in Antiquity, and which I believe is not to be found in Chriſtendom; For a Miniſter of *England* is not Re-ordained by the *French*, or by the *Dutch*, to make him a Miniſter of the *French* or *Dutch* Church, though it might be otherwiſe here, becauſe the Reaſon for it before mentioned, is not there as here: But as to the part of the *Submitter*, the evil of Re-ordination lying only in the Vacating our firſt Miniſtry, which is Sacriledge, and here being no ſuch matter, ſo long as our former Miniſtry is publickly profeſſed by the man himſelf, and Biſhop, and whole Church, there can be no Evil (I ſay) in a ſecond Impoſition of Hands, as thus uſed only, unleſs you will ſay, it is a breach of the Third Commandment, a taking an Ordinance of God in Vain; when there is here no *Ordinance of God* at all, but an *Humane Inſtitution* for ſo good an end as Peace in the Church; which being made the Qualification of a perſon, for the uſe of his Miniſtry in publick, and the enjoyment of a *Living*. Who is the man that will ſay, it is done in vain? Nevertheleſs, if this *Device* ſhould happily paſs Both Houſes (which being a *New Thing*, and preſented bare faced, will rather be called a *Monſter*, and turn'd out of Doors) two things muſt be adviſed.

One is, That in the adminiſtring ſuch an Inſtitution, Inſtead of theſe words, the Biſhop is appointed to uſe, *Take thou Authority to Exerciſe thy Miniſtry in the Church of* England (whereat the Nonconformiſt Miniſter having his Miniſterial Authority already, will Scruple) it is better theſe be uſed: *Receive thou Admittance, by the Impoſition of my Hands, to the Exerciſe of thy Miniſtry, in the Church of* England, *and in any Church in my Dioceſs where thou ſhall be called.*

The *Other* is, That the adminiſtrating ſuch an humane Ordinance as this, in order to Union, may not be called *Re-ordination*, which is a Name ſo odious in the Church in all Ages; but as it is a *New Thing*, and ought to have a *New Office* appointed for it; ſo it ſhould have a *New Name* alſo. Let a Conſtitution or *Canon* be made for it, and an *Office* or *Form* to adminiſter it, and let it be called *Canonical Admiſſion.*

And now I have ſaid thus much, This is not the thing wherein I am concern'd in my *Bill.* To be ordained to the Office of a Miniſter, does make a Man, in common account, a Miniſter of the *Univerſal Church*; and a Miniſter of the *Church Univerſal*, muſt be a Miniſter in her Church

Church of *England*, and of *France*, and of *Holland*, and of every Country; and the Imposition of Hands, to make a Man a Minister in the Church of *England*, who was a Minister in every one before, is a *New Thing*, (I have said) and perhaps will be thought an *Odd Thing* too: But to make a Man, who is a Minister already of the Universal Church, so to be the Minister of such a *particular* place, that was not their particular Minister before, is no *New Thing*, nor *Odd Thing*. And if every Person, not Episcopally ordained already, shall be bound to go to his Bishop, when he has such a Call, for his Blessing, with Imposition of Hands in reference to such a Place, that is, to pray for God's Blessing or Assistance of him, to fulfill that Work; there can be nothing of Scruple or doubt about the Lawfulness of his so doing. Only I will suppose an Office here to be made, as I have said before, and in a Prayer fitted to the Case, the Person being on his knees, and the Bishop reading over him, I would instead of those words before prescribed, have these only brought in,—*Whom by this Imposition of my Hands, we recommend to the Grace of God, for the Work unto which he is called.*

One thing yet I must take notice of, That in the Bill for *Comprehension* in *Charles*'s time, it came to be allowed at the *Committee*, that the Ordination of those that were ordained only by *Presbyters*, from 1644. to 1660. should be held good (though Others were left to be Re-ordained); and I cannot but be Sorry, that a thing so small, so equitable as that (when there was no Bishops to go to for Orders) should be with drawn; Seeing the Testimony of an *English Parliament* to the Validity of *Presbyterian Orders*, in honour to the Reformed Churches abroad, were some considerable Attainment.

FINIS.